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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KUNR](#) [UNGA](#) [UNSC](#) [GE](#) [JA](#) [BR](#) [IN](#)
SUBJECT: UNGA: NO SURPRISES IN FOURTH ROUND OF
INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATIONS ON UNSC REFORM

REF: A. USUN NEW YORK 1055
[1](#)B. USUN NEW YORK 827

[1](#)1. (SBU) Summary: The informal plenary of the General Assembly met on December 7 and 8 for the first meeting of the fourth round of intergovernmental negotiations (IGN) on Security Council reform. 52 delegations spoke on "all the positions and proposals by Member States." Most of the discussion was repeated from previous rounds and from the plenary session on November 12-13. The Group of Four (G4) and African Group reiterated previous positions and called for a negotiating text from the Chair while the Uniting for Consensus (UFC) bloc re-circulated their previous proposal from April and urged others to circulate papers. The Philippines Perm Rep circulated several draft resolutions which drew no substantive comments. The Chair's concluding comments inviting new proposals clearly implied that he continues to have no plans to table his own negotiating text. The Japanese and Dutch Perm Reps acknowledged in their own remarks that next steps would have to be member state-driven. The second meeting of the fourth round is expected in mid-January on areas of convergence. End summary.

[1](#)2. (SBU) The informal plenary of the General Assembly met on December 7 and 8 for its first meeting of the fourth round of intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. As set forth in the Chair's November 16 letter to the membership, the session focused on "all the positions and proposals by Member States." 52 member states took the floor during the seven hours of meetings and Italy was alone in making a second statement during the interactive portion of the discussion.

[1](#)3. (SBU) Most delegations reiterated their positions from previous rounds (ref B) and the November 12-13 plenary discussion (ref A). Italy, Colombia, Slovenia, and the Philippines reiterated and/or re-circulated their earlier proposals. Denmark and Greece took the floor for the first time. Denmark called for enlargement in both categories but with no extension of the veto to new members. On the intermediate option, Denmark voiced support but said there must be a review clause. Greece advocated expansion in both categories of membership, permanent and non-permanent, with greater representation for African, Asia, and small and developing states, but did state that they are open to an interim solution.

Group of Four

¶4. (SBU) The Brazilian Perm Rep took the floor first and reiterated Group of Four (G4) support for an expansion in both categories and said that the intermediate model lacks clarity. She also said that negotiations could not move any further forward in the absence of a negotiating text and called for one from the Chair since he enjoys the confidence of the room. The Indian Perm Rep called on those who are not in favor of an expansion in both categories "to reflect on their position and acknowledge that the interest of the membership at large, and that of the organization itself, is best served by supporting the views that the vast majority espouses." (Comment: The Indian Perm Rep assumes that the "vast majority" favors his position, but he has never put it to a formal test with a vote in the plenary. End comment.) He, too, called for a negotiating text from the Chair.

¶5. (SBU) The Japanese Perm Rep argued that the current composition of the Council could not be left unchanged since that could lead to the erosion of the Council's legitimacy. (Comment: USUN has argued in negotiations that the Council's legitimacy is based on the Charter, not its composition. Perhaps, the Japanese Perm Rep meant to refer to the Council's credibility. End comment.) The Japanese Perm Rep also called for a concise paper of the different positions and proposals of member states and groups, but he suggested that if the Chair was not forthcoming with such a paper, it should be "Member State-driven." The new German Perm Rep took the floor and noted that little had changed in the debate since he was last in New York 20 years ago. He called for a negotiation text from the Chair and suggested that

straw polls be used to identify options on which to concentrate. Unlike the other members of the G4, he professed a readiness to discuss the intermediate solution as a way ahead, though not if the seats would be limited to 3-5 year terms since such members would not be "true peers for permanent members." Again, he proposed longer-term seats of 15 years followed by a review conference to determine if those seats should become permanent.

Uniting for Consensus

¶6. (SBU) The Uniting for Consensus (UFC) bloc members reiterated their opposition to any expansion of permanent members and voiced continued support for the Colombian/Italian proposal introduced in April. The Colombian delegation re-circulated the proposal and asked that it be considered a conference document. (Note: Document e-mailed to IO/UNP. End note.) The Italian Perm Rep emphasized that, as a proposal, it is open for discussion and is not a take-it-or-leave-it proposal. Most UFC states called on other states to put forward new compromise proposals. The Argentine Perm Rep responded to G4 calls that the intermediate option lacks clarity and said that member states should be discussing and clarifying the intermediate option together, not alone.

¶7. (SBU) In response to the Indian statement that the "vast majority" supports expansion in both categories and the German proposal for straw polling, the Italian representative reminded both, during the interactive portion, that they could go to a formal plenary meeting at any time to count the actual support they have. Apart from that, there are no other mechanisms in the informal plenary to count support for one option over another.

African Group

¶8. (SBU) Nine African states spoke, led by the Sierra Leone Perm Rep, who chairs the African Group in New York. All espoused the Ezulwini Consensus and Sirte Declaration which call for two permanent seats for Africa with full veto rights

and a total of five non-permanent seats in an expanded Council of 26. A number reiterated that the African Union would determine which African states would sit in those seats. Most African states joined the G4 in calling for a paper from the Chair outlining the proposals from all member states. The Nigerian representative did acknowledge that there remain questions on the size of the Council and varying calls for an increase between 20 and 26 seats. The South African Perm Rep questioned the intermediate option's viability saying he doubted that the Charter could be amended and ratified twice. The Egyptian Perm Rep, always trying to check forward movement on this issue, noted that if certain groups receive more permanent seats (i.e., Europe) then Africa reserves the right to ask for another permanent seat (beyond the two it currently requests). He also suggested limiting the use of the veto so that it cannot be used for the election of the Secretary-General, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide.

¶9. (SBU) The Libyan Deputy Perm Rep, after espousing the common African position, reiterated the Libyan proposal to replace current Council permanent members with regional seats filled by the African Union, ASEAN, the European Union, the Russian Federation, the United States, and the League of Arab States with all or none holding the veto. (Note: He did not mention a Latin American regional organization or China. End note.) He also suggested, without providing additional details, that providing Africa immediately with a permanent seat would "help the success of the negotiations." (Note: We understand that the Libyan delegation has unsuccessfully tried to convince the African Group to put forward a resolution that would only add one permanent seat for Africa to the Council. We understand there is currently no consensus in the group to deviate from the Ezulwini Consensus and Sirte Declaration. End note.)

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¶10. (SBU) The UK and the France reiterated their support for permanent membership for Brazil, India, Germany, Japan, and an African state and pressed for greater focus on the intermediate option which could lead to permanent seats after a review. The French Perm Rep also called for a permanent seat for an Arab state. Both said they would welcome a negotiating text from the Chair. The Russian Perm Rep gave a long statement reiterating the Russian position on all of the five key issues and endorsing the Chair's approach of finding convergence. He, too, suggested a closer look at the intermediate option. On the veto, he cautioned against changing any of the current permanent member's prerogatives, but said it is possible to look at options for new members but only after determining the membership of an enlarged Council which should number in the low 20s. The Chinese representative called for an expanded Council with greater representation for developing states.

Effect of Lisbon Treaty

¶11. (SBU) There were several references during the meeting about what impact the recent entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty might have on the reform process. The Italian representative suggested that it is time to seriously consider such a major development. The Portuguese Perm Rep, a G4 supporter, also referred to the treaty: "The Lisbon Treaty brings the Members of the European Union further closer (sic) and established mechanisms providing for a better external representation of the Union. Somehow, these new realities will have to translate in the manner the European Union interacts with the Security Council." The Dutch Perm Rep suggested that the concept of regional seats in the Council be explored at a review, especially whether such seats should be permanent and which regions should be represented.

Other states

¶12. (SBU) As he did last spring, the Philippines Perm Rep circulated a number of proposals in the form of draft resolutions on restricting the veto, affirming the full plenary jurisdiction of the General Assembly vis a vis the Security Council, Council working methods, Council rules of procedure, and categories of membership. (Note: Proposals e-mailed to IO/UNP. End note.) Similar to last spring, no delegations commented on the specifics of the proposals aside from the fact that they had been presented by the Philippines. The Palau representative called the Security Council "archaic and untenable" and called for a modernized Council that can react to the sea level rise threatening his state and other island states.

¶13. (SBU) The Dutch Perm Rep called for a "mixed" intermediate option of 8-10 year seats with a review after two terms. He called for permanent members to voluntarily commit to certain restrictions on the use of the veto. He said all member states should be able to submit their views in writing to the Council. (Note: All member states can already do so by writing a letter to the Security Council President and asking that the letter be circulated to the rest of the Council. End note.) Lastly, he urged member states to draft the negotiating text, saying, "no paper, no progress."

Next meeting

¶14. (SBU) At the end of the meeting, the Chair, Afghan Perm Rep Tanin, reminded delegations that he is always ready to receive proposals in writing, especially from "innovative coalitions." He announced that the next meeting would be in mid-January on "areas of convergence."
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